

Message Text

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ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15

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R 241200Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY LOME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0000

INFO AMEMBASSY ACCRA

AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY COTONOU

AMEMBASSY NAIMEY

AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU

AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L L O M E 1 6 2 3

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: TO, PGOV

SUBJ: GOT MINISTERIAL CHANGES

REF: LOME 1599

SUMMARY: APPOINTMENT OF NEW MINISTERS OF FINANCE, RURAL ECONOMY, INTERIOR, AND INFORMATION (REFTEL) IMPROVES OVERALL EFFICIENCY AND TECHNICAL CAPABILITY OF GOVERNMENT WHILE MAINTAINING TRIBAL BALANCE. FROM OUR POINT OF VIEW NEW MINISTERS ARE NET IMPROVEMENT OVER OLD. END SUMMARY

1. SOURCE AT PRESIDENCY GAVE DCM FOLLOWING BACKGROUND ON OUSTER FORMER MINISTER OF INTERIOR LAMBONY, WHO HAS BEEN IN CABINET, EXCEPT FOR BRIEF INTERMISSIONS, SINCE 1963: REGULAR ANNUAL INDUCTION OF APPROXIMATELY 24 RECRUITS INTO NATIONAL POLICE FORCE WAS SCHEDULED TAKE PLACE JUST AFTER EYADEMA'S DEPARTURE FOR OAU SUMMIT IN MAY. EYADEMA RETURNED TO DISCOVER LAMBONY HAD INDUCTED OVER 80 MEN, MOSTLY FROM HIS NATIVE AREA OF DAPANGO, AND THEY WERE ALREADY IN TRAINING AT MILITARY CAMP IN LAMA KARA. EYADEMA SENT THE RECRUITS PACKING TO THEIR HOMES AND SEVERELY
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REPRIMANDED LAMBONY. FOR LONG TIME EYADEMA HAS BEEN INCREASINGLY

DISPLEASED WITH LAMBONY'S INEFFICIENCY, HEAVY DRINKING, AND GENERAL INCOMPETENCE, AND THIS INCIDENT TRIGGERED LAMBONY'S DISMISSAL.

2. SAME SOURCE SAID THAT OUSTED MINISTER OF RURAL ECONOMY, AMEGA, HAD INCURRED PRESIDENT'S ANGER BY DEMANDING ELABORATE RECEPTIONS WITH MUCH FANFARE ON HIS FREQUENT TRIPS UPCOUNTRY. THIS CONFIRMED BY GERMAN CHARGE WHO SAID HE MET AMEGA ON ONE OF THESE EXCURSIONS, WAS INVITED TO PARTICIPATE IN GRAND SOIREE AT HOTEL IN SOKODE IN AMEGA'S HONOR, AND OBSERVED THAT IT WAS WHAT ONE WOULD HAVE EXPECTED FOR CHIEF OF STATE, NOT JUNIOR MINISTER. AMEGA'S PERFORMANCE IN RURAL ECONOMY MINISTRY ALSO FOUND WANTING. HE HAS NO EXPERTISE IN FIELD OF AGRICULTURE AND REVEALS LACK OF INTEREST AS WELL, HIS FIRST LOVE BEING THE JUDICIARY.

3. DECISION DROP DERMANE-ALI AND LAURENT GABA PROBABLY PROMPTED BY DESIRE REORGANIZE GOVERNMENT WITHOUT ENLARGING IT AND AT SAME TIME PRESERVE TRIBAL BALANCE. REASON FOR ESTABLISHMENT SEPARATE SECSTATE FOR TELECOMMUNICATIONS NEVER WAS CLEAR IN FIRST PLACE AND GABA'S FUNCTION WAS LOST IN MIDST OF EXISTING TELECOMM EXPERTISE WITHIN PTT. DERMANE-ALI, WHILE A COMPETENT ADMINISTRATOR, MAY NOT HAVE BEEN SUFFICIENTLY DYNAMIC IN HIS INFORMATION POST AS AN RPT PROPAGANDIST. HIS MORE ENERGETIC SUCCESSOR, MICHEL EKLO, AS ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY OF RPT, HAS BEEN IN FOREFRONT OF PARTY BOOSTERS WITH HIS PROPAGANDA ARTICLES FEATURED IN THE "COIN DU RPT" PAGE OF TOGO PRESSE AT LEAST ONCE A WEEK. EMBASSY UNDERSTANDS EKLO WILL RETAIN HIS RPT POST TOGETHER WITH HIS NEW MINISTERIAL DUTIES.

4. PRESIDENT HAS SUCCEEDED IN KEEPING PREVIOUSLY EXISTING TRIBAL BALANCE IN NEW CABINET. LAMBONY (MOBA), AMEGA (EWE), DERMANE-ALI (COTOCOLI) AND GABA (AKPOSSO) ARE OUT; BAGNAH (MOBA), KODJO (EWE), FOFANA (COTOCOLI), AND EKLO (AKPOSSO) ARE IN.

5. FROM OUR VIEWPOINT NEW CABINET CAN BE REGARDED AS IMPROVEMENT, FOR REMOVAL OF LAMBONY ALONE. NOT POPULAR WITH ANY OF FOREIGN DIPLOMATS, HE HAS BEEN REPORTED ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS TO HAVE BEEN CRITICAL OF US AT CABINET MEETINGS, PRINCIPALLY FOR OUR ALLEGED STINGINESS AS AN AID DONOR.

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6. KODJO, WHO VISITED US ON LEADER GRANT LAST YEAR, IS AN OUTSTANDING FRIEND OF US AND FURTHERMORE IS ONE OF MOST BRILLIANT AND CAPABLE TOGOLESE IN OR OUT OF GOVERNMENT. CONFIRMING OTHER INDICATIONS CONCERNING SURPRISE NATURE OF APPOINTMENTS, KODJO TOLD AMBASSADOR HE WAS CALLED TO PRESIDENCY AT 0730 TUESDAY MORNING 21 AUGUST AND INFORMED BY PRESIDENT OF HIS APPOINTMENT. HE BELIEVES OTHER THREE NEW MINISTERS WERE INFORMED EVEN LATER

IN SAME MORNING. OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENT WAS AT NOON. KODJO SAYS THAT, AT LEAST FOR TIME BEING, HE WILL RETAIN AS WELL HIS POSITION AS HEAD OF NATIONAL INVESTMENT SOCIETY WHICH IS BY NATURE CLOSELY RELATED TO FINANCE.

7. FOFANA, A POLITICAL UNKNOWN, IS AGRICULTURAL EXPERT, UNLIKE AMEGA, AND HAS MADE EXCELLENT REPUTATION FOR SELF AS ADMINISTRATOR IN ROLE OF CHEF CIR OF KANDE SINCE JUNE '71. HE HAS COOPERATED CLOSELY WITH PCV'S IN KANDE, WHO HAVE HIGHEST OPINION OF HIM.

8. BAGNAH HAS PROVEN ABILITY AS OPAT DIRECTOR. GERMAN CHARGE WHO HAS HAD EXTENSIVE DEALINGS WITH HIM ON EEC RELATED TRADE MATTERS PRAISES HIS INTELLIGENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE ABILITY. HIS PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE IN INTERIOR WAS AS CHEF CIR DAPANGO AND SOKODE BETWEEN '63 AND '67. OUR RELATIONS WITH HIM HAVE BEEN GOOD.

9. ONLY QUESTION MARK IS EKLO WHO COULD TURN OUT TO HAVE NUISANCE VALUE TO US IF HE EXERCISES LEFTIST PROCLIVITIES IN SPHERE OF PUBLIC MEDIA. A FORMER STUDENT IN PRAGUE (MARRIED TO NATIVE OF MARTINIQUE WHOM HE MET WHILE IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA), EKLO IS CLEARLY ONE OF PROMOTERS OF CLOSER RELATIONS WITH COMMUNIST COUNTRIES. EVEN HE HAS BEEN PERSONALLY VERY FRIENDLY WITH AMBASSADOR, HOWEVER.

10. FROM STANDPOINT OF PRACTICAL MANAGEMENT, SEPARATION OF COMMERCE, INDUSTRY AND TOURISM FROM PLAN, AND ESTABLISHMENT AS SEPARATE MINISTRY, IS NO DOUBT GOOD MOVE. SINCE PRINCIPAL THRUST OF DIRECTORATE OF SOCIAL AFFAIRS WORK IN TOGO HAS BEEN IN HEALTH FIELD, ITS TRANSFER TO MINISTRY OF HEALTH MAKES SENSE. AS FOR RETURN OF PTT TO PUBLIC WORKS, BEST EXPLANATION IS THAT NEW SECRETARIAT OF STATE (ESTABLISHED 1971) NEVER GOT OFF GROUND
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AND IN END BECAME SUPERFLUOUS.
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